

Little Slice

Who's Been Loving You? -

II

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Little Slice by usnavi

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PROMPT: prompt of Eddie being afraid to hold richies hand for the first time

Beverly sniffs as she plays with her lighter in between her fingers, “You know you can just grab his hand and he’d probably hold hands with you, right?”

“What the fuck?”

“He’s, like, head over heels in love with you—“ her smile is huge and teasing, and Eddie blushes even more.

“Shut up, Beverly—“

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Author's Note:

Characters are not mine. Enjoy.

A/N: damn i am shattered and i want to just lay down and sleep. i am in a creative slump so excuse this ! title again came from watsky. he's been my go-to soundtrack to listen to. Feedback is appreciated ;)

im on [tumblr](#). come visit me ;)

Eddie clears his throat.

Nothing.

Eddie clears his throat again.

Still, Richie is chattering away at Beverly, who is absently picking at her nails as they stand outside in the school's hallways, waiting for the rest of their friends as the bell rings.

Eddie clears his throat again, and this time, Richie looks up, raising his eyebrows as he shoots Eddie a questioning smile.

“Yeah, Eds?”

Maybe, if Eddie looks at his hand, really, really intently, he'll get the memo.

“Something wrong?”

Eddie bites his lip and shakes his head. *Get the memo, fuckface*, he thinks, fingers twitching as he drops another look at the long fingers curled around a book, but Richie only shakes his head and tugs Eddie in close with a hand on his neck and presses a wet kiss onto the

smaller boy's forehead, making Eddie recoil in disgust, sticking his tongue out and gagging exaggeratedly.

When he pulls away, he can feel his ears tingle, waiting for that loud shout of *get that gay shit out of my education and burn in hell, faggots!*

"You're cute, Eds. Real cute."

"Fuck you and your ancestors, Tozier." his heartbeat settles as Richie looks down at him comfortingly, eyes wide and concerned behind his glasses.

"Whatever you say, baby."

Beverly is the first one to notice.

She's always been the more sensitive person in the group, in terms of things like... Eddie being emotionally stunted and too shy to hold his boyfriend's hand. He knows it's *okay*— it's just that... Richie's on a different level. He's handsome, and *tall*, and he's just not on Eddie's league at all that it makes him feel weird.

Yeah. *Weird*.

Beverly sniffs as she plays with her lighter in between her fingers, "You know you can just grab his hand and he'd probably hold hands with you, right?"

"What the fuck?"

"He's, like, head over heels in love with you—" her smile is huge and teasing, and Eddie blushes even more.

“Shut up, Beverly—“

“Honestly, you can probably get away with murder as long as he’s concerned.” She pauses and gives Eddie a shrug, her smile falling minutely, and her eyes not meeting his, “...I’m kinda envious.”

Eddie reddens and glares at Beverly, his nose scrunching up in that way of his when he’s about to go on his ten mile per minute tirade, but before he does, he feels warmth pressing up against his back, and Richie’s chin on his head, arms around his waist.

He can feel Richie’s grin as Richie hums happily, squeezing Eddie into a tighter hold, “What’s my favourite boy talking about with the girl I kinda tolerate?”

Eddie snorts at that, and Beverly purses her lips at him, giving him a look that says *traitor*.

The tall redhead sneers and flips Richie the bird, her lips twisting as she opens her mouth, and before Eddie can reach out to stop her from speaking, she says lazily, “We were talking about Gabe García; you know, the quarterback? He’s in Eddie and I’s geography class.”

The Pippi Longstocking looking twat’s (also known as Beverly) lips twitch as Eddie shoots her a withering glare, “We think he’s hot, don’t we, Ed?”

He doesn’t see it, but with the way Richie’s arms tighten around him, he could probably guess and guess correctly that Richie’s face has gone dark, but his smile is still there.

Eddie shivers as Richie says, “Is that so?”

“Beverly’s shitting you,” Eddie says matter of factly, if a little bit too quickly, “We were talking about her huge lesbian crush on Ella Andreas,”

“No fucking way, Bev.” Richie’s disposition immediately changes as he chortles deeply, “The fucking *cheerleading captain*? Can you be any more of a fucking cliché?”

Beverly gives Eddie the stink eye that means that she’ll be dealing

with him later, and smiles sarcastically at Richie.

When Richie walks away, having called by Stan for their debate practice, Beverly kicks him in the shin and hisses, "Asshole." Eddie rolls his eyes at her and starts walking to the field, opting to watch the cheerleaders practice, (more for Beverly's benefit than anything) the girl falling into step with him, shoulder-to-shoulder as they passive-aggressively ignore each other.

But Beverly know she forgives Eddie as the boy hands her a Capri Sun from his bag, his eyes wide and shiny as he looks up at her with sincere apology in his eyes.

She hates herself a little bit for falling *every time* for Eddie's puppy dog eyes.

"You really should just do it, you know." Beverly murmurs, once they sit down on one of the bleachers, her ankles crossed over one another, "Can't keep on waiting for him to make a move forever." she watches one of the girls get thrown in the air, her eyes following every move.

Eddie sighs, "I just—" he shakes his head, gives an exhausted shrug, "I just don't understand,"

Their conversation takes a pause as they simultaneously say, "Oh, nice." as one girl does a complicated twirl in the air, clapping minutely.

The redhead's green eyes narrow, "Understand what?" she asks as she side-eyes Eddie, whose eyes are still focused on the complicated routines their cheer leading team is doing.

He's helpless as he murmurs, looking all of his fifteen years, "*Why?*" his head drops down, "Why am I so *scared?*"

"Oh."

Beverly sighs, "You know, you guys are lucky. You've found each other early," the side of her mouth quirks as she plays with the straw of her Capri Sun, "Some people don't have it as good as you and Richie."

She swallows around a lump in her throat, “Fight for *that*.”

“I guess,” Eddie reluctantly agrees, biting his lower lip as he looks Beverly in the eyes, “You should really ask Ella Andreas out.”

Beverly throws the Capri Sun box at him, and that was that.

Richie looks at Eddie, who is standing, looking up at Bill, talking animatedly with his hands waving about. Probably going off on the health benefits of coffee or something— his eyes track every move Eddie’s hands make, the small, graceful fingers cutting through the air like... like bamboo? Oh, fuck. Whenever he looks at Eddie, it’s like his mind’s just fucking stopped and he can’t formulate words.

Only Eddie, he thinks as he saunters up to the boy, surprising him as Richie takes his hand in his and presses a kiss to each knuckle, making Eddie redden and snatch his hand away, eyes narrowing at Richie.

Bill chuckles, “Nuh-nuh-not in puh-public, guh-guys,” he jokes, and Eddie’s brows twitch downward at that, pulling away from Richie and surreptitiously looking around.

Richie flips him off, “Let us have our Disney fucking moment, Denbrough. Not everyone can look like a Disney Prince while pining after Jewish Snow White over there,” he thrusts his thumb behind him, where Stan, who is absently rifling through another bird book, probably given by Ben, hums silently to himself.

Bill blushes furiously, “Fuh-fuck yuh-yuh-you, Tuh-Tozier.”

This is the part where Eddie usually tells him off for doing that kind of stuff while Richie listens or sometimes even snark back if Eddie’s

being particularly mouthy, but Eddie just shakes his head at him and resumes talking to Bill, his cheeks still red.

When Eddie presses a soft kiss to his cheek and excuses himself so he can go to band practice, fingers lingering around Richie's wrist, and Richie has half a mind to just follow Eddie around the whole day. His eyes follow Eddie's retreating form helplessly, his wrist tingling from where Eddie's fingers wrapped around it.

Bill nudges him with his shoulder, smirking knowingly.

The other boy rolls his eyes and nudges right back.

"Muh-maybe yuh-yuh-you can hold his huh-hand... o-on yuh-your way huh-home," he suggests, and Richie blushes.

He makes it sound so *dweeby*, like Richie's got some kind of problem with showing affection, least of all *holding hands*! He and Eddie held hands all the time when they were kids! But now, it's *different*. There's love in it and shit!

And if Richie's being completely honest with himself, it's *dangerous*.

"*Maybe* you can grow a pair and ask out Uris, but we can't all have what we want, don't we?" he snaps out defensively, although the smile from watching Eddie doesn't disappear.

"Plus," Richie says after one quiet beat, "I don't want him to get in trouble, you know?"

"Juh-just suh-sayin', man." Bill shrugs like he knows nothing, rubbing at his nose before continuing his sentence, "Yuh-you muh-muh-may have yuh-years tuh-together, but thu-that's a *maybe* tuh-too."

"Yeah," Richie bites his lip, "Right. He's not gonna be with me forever. I'm a fucking mess, Stuttering Bill. Impart some of that wisdom on me."

"Huh-hey, I'm no ex-ex...*expert*," he smiles at Richie, "Yuh-you said so your...suh-self."

"We're a bunch of idiots, aren't we? Why does Eddie even put up

with me?”

“I duh-don’t know, e-either,” Bill dodges a noogie from an indignant Richie, “wuh-why don’t you uh-ask him, tuh-trashmouth?”

Beverly startles when Richie comes into her house late one night, in his hand a piece of paper.

It reads:

Hey, I know you’re in the band, but would you please let go of that flute and hold my hand?

He looks at Beverly intently, “You think he’d dig it?”

Beverly throws him out and tells him to get a pair of balls and just grab Eddie’s hand.

Eddie’s far more graceful about it, but he’s such a fucking *serial planner*.

“So, what do you think? While we’re walking home, should I just, like *hold his hand*, or do I wait for him to do it? Oh, god. He’s going to think I’m clingy. Oh my god. He’s going to break up with me.”

He quiets, “Or worse. What if someone beats him up? Oh my god. I’m putting him in danger.”

He’s also an over thinker.

Beverly sighs and wonders what kind of concealer she can use so she can hide travel suitcase sized eye bags under her eyes.

“No, maybe I’ll break up with him, first—”

Beverly groans and throws a pillow at Eddie’s face.

Richie does this... thing, where he comes up to Eddie and grabs his hand before kissing his knuckles, before dropping it again as he slots himself beside Eddie.

While Eddie thinks it’s cute, he can’t help the way he just blushes and turns away from Richie, and the taller boy just chuckles.

Richie’s on the debate team with Ben and Stan– and it’s customary for Eddie to come along and watch their debates, along with Bev or Bill, or even Mike. Richie is *dashing* when he’s passionately arguing about something. All those years spent being a sarcastic, mouthy little shit paid off, because now, he’s this eloquent son of a bitch that probably knows how to legally get away with murder.

Eddie fucking *loves* him.

The taller boy smiles and waves from his podium, wearing the scarlet red tie Eddie gave him for his birthday, the little cream coloured band aids visible even to Eddie. He smiles, and Richie winks at him, before turning his smirk to his competitor.

“The topic: *the recognition and rights of the LGBT+ community.*”

Mrs. Vijaya tucks her glasses up her long nose and nods at Richie’s opponent, a girl with a shock of blond hair atop her head, and her cheeks red as she gears herself up to preache some homophobic bullshit.

Richie’s eyes glaze over as his teeth show through his sharp grin, waiting for his turn to absolutely *rip the shit apart* that fucking topic.

Beverly leans in on the desk and gives Richie a thumbs up, to which the boy winks at.

Yeah, fucking hell, does Eddie love him.

So, when Richie comes up to him, having won the debate after an hour and a half, tugging his necktie loose, Eddie tilts his head up and laces his fingers with Richie, beaming brightly at the taller brown-eyed boy. Their hands fit perfectly against each other, fingers intertwining like ivies that’s grown together. Eddie feels warmth run through him, but he shivers nonetheless. His heart is beating a mile a minute.

Richie smiles just as, if not more, brightly than Eddie, bringing their interlocked hands up to his lips and pressing a kiss to each of Eddie’s knuckles, before knocking his forehead against Eddie’s gently.

Oddly enough, he doesn’t care about anything right now, just Richie’s hand in his, just Richie’s passionate words for people like him, Bill, Beverly, and Stan.

He squeezes Richie’s hands tighter. *Thank you*, he doesn’t say.

Maybe this can become Eddie’s thing.

“Congratulations on the win, trashmouth.”

“Did it for you,” Richie hums. “I did it for us.”

Mrs. Vijaya snaps at them, smiling fondly, “Not here, lovebirds.”

Richie just laughs, “We’ll do what we want, Mrs. Vijaya. For gay

solidarity!”

Beverly, having watched the exchange, sighs and turns around, walking away. If that’s all it fucking took for them to get their heads out their asses, Beverly would have engaged Richie in a fucking discourse earlier.

Beverly giggles as she hitches up an ebony-haired girl with bright green eyes on her hip, blowing a raspberry on her cheek. The little girl turns to face her, giggling wildly as Beverly gently attacks her with more kisses.

“Did you know,” she says in between kisses, “that your papa and your daddy didn’t hold hands until they were *fifteen*?”

The baby in her arms snorts as if disbelieving.

“Oh, yes, little Jessie! They were both so emotionally constipated, and it put so many grey hairs in Auntie Bev’s beautiful red hair!”

Eddie narrows his eyes from where he’s tying up the hair of Jessie’s younger sister, Maggie, “Stop indoctrinating my children.” he says as he expertly puts a teal barrette in the girl’s hair.

Richie smiles from where he’s distracting the child in Eddie’s care, Maggie’s eyes wide and looking like a carbon copy of Eddie Tozier, down to the upturn of his nose and the dotting of his freckles, “What he said.”

Beverly smiles as she puts down the two year old, Eddie hitching up Maggie onto his hip. She watches Eddie look up at Richie, the laugh lines beside his eyes prominent and well-earned. Richie, smiles back, looking content and happy and *secure*, winking at Eddie discreetly.

“Hold onto your daddy’s hand, Jessie,” Eddie says carefully, and Richie takes the little girl’s hand in his, and in the other, Eddie’s hand, before walking to the Tozier’s backyard, where Bill and Stan are arguing about who’s going to grill, matching golden bands around their ring fingers, while Ben and Mike sit happily, sipping away at their margaritas.

Beverly turns around and smiles back at Ella Andreas, beautiful as the day Beverly saw her flying in the sky, who loops her arm around Beverly’s, humming contentedly.

And pouring from the Tozier family’s television, *“It’s a victory for gay and lesbian couples who have fought so long for their basic civil rights. It’s a victory for their children, whose families will now be recognized as equal to any other—”*
